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HOME AND SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED BY
MABEL TUTTLE FRUSH

ROW, PETERSON & COMPANY



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Shakespeare, William
Home and School Shakespeare

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED WITH
HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES, SUGGESTIONS
ON LITERARY INTERPRETATION, LESSON HELPS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

It has been the purpose, in this arrangement of Shakespeare's most popular comedy, to provide the teacher with material which can be used to excellent advantage in the class room, and also be made an interesting feature of the regular literary program.

Wherever possible in the adaptation the editor has employed the language of the poet, retaining in entire such portions of the drama as experience has shown the children thoroughly enjoy. The scenes included are the strongest in the play and, by reason of their dramatic intensity, the most easily comprehended.

Many of the difficulties contingent upon beginning the study of the drama form have been eliminated in the present arrangement, which is designed for an introductory course in the study of Shakespeare. It has been found that the dramas are quite likely to prove too long for young readers to find their study a pleasure, save in the hands of the exceptional teacher. Objections have also been offered to the selection of single scenes from different plays, since, though they serve to acquaint the pupil with the work of the poet, they do not afford an opportunity of appreciating the marvelous skill and craftsmanship revealed in the development of the dramas. The intention has been to avoid both of these objections in the present volume by briefly sketching the events which occur before, after, and between the scenes offered, thus holding them in unity. In the con-

necting chapters much care has been exercised to choose those lines which will best serve to stimulate the pupil's interest in the scenes omitted, and awaken in him a desire to read them.

Extended experience and a close observation of children at Shakespearean performances has convinced me that they can profitably study the drama earlier than is generally supposed, and they will always find plays enjoyable if properly presented.

MABEL TUTTLE FRUSH.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

On Henley street, in the village of Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, England, there stands a little two-story building in which was born William Shakespeare, the greatest of all English authors. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but the old parish register in the village church shows that he was christened on April 26, 1564. Since children were then generally christened at the age of three days, he is supposed to have been born on April 23. That happens also to have been the day of his death, which occurred in 1616.

He was the eldest son of John and Mary Shakespeare, and the third child in a family of eight. During his childhood his people appear to have been in fairly comfortable circumstances, but later his father, who was a small shopkeeper, and at one time mayor of Stratford, met with reverses.

Of the early years of Shakespeare very little is known. He received but limited schooling, and it is not known what occupation he followed before going to London.

In November, 1582, at the age of eighteen, the poet was married to Anne Hathaway, who was seven years his senior. She was also a native of Stratford parish, having been born in Shottery, a little village now noted as the site of the "Anne Hathaway Cottage," in which she passed her girlhood. Three children were born of this marriage: Susanna, Hamnet and Judith, the last two twins. The daughters survived their father, but Hamnet died at the age of twelve.

In his early twenties Shakespeare went to London, where he spent the greater part of the time until he retired in 1610. He was connected with the theatre in various capacities, and had written eighteen dramas before he was thirty-four. Success attended his efforts, and he became the owner of some valuable property, including "New Place," one of the finest residences in Stratford. He was residing there at the time of his death, which occurred at the age of fifty-two years. He is buried in Stratford church, whence doubtless his remains would have been transferred to Westminster long ago were it not for the inscription above the crypt.

GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DICCC THE DVST ENCLOASED HEARE:
BLESE BE ^EY MAN Y SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST BE HE ^TY MOVES MY BONES.

SOURCES OF THE PLOT

Although Shakespeare possessed the ability to create wonderful plots, he seldom directed his talents to that end, preferring to adapt to his purposes those created by others. This is the reason he has sometimes been pronounced a plagiarist. In a measure the charge is justified, yet the authors from whom he has borrowed have always profited thereby, Shakespeare's genius having saved from oblivion the name of more than one ambitious writer.

The characters and plot for the Merchant of Venice were gathered from not less than four sources. Shylock was taken from Marlowe's "Jew of Malta," and from "The Orator," by Alexander Silvayn. In all probability, Shakespeare obtained the idea for the speeches in the Trial Scene from the ninety-fifth declamation in Silvayn's volume entitled, "Of a Jew who would for his debt have a pound of the flesh of a Christian." The chief source of the plot, however, was the "Adventures of Giannetto" in a collection of Italian tales called the "Pecorone." The hero, a young Venetian merchant, fell in love with a rich young widow, whose castle was called "Belmonte." The money necessary to send Giannetto forth to woo the lady was borrowed from a Jew on the security of his foster-father. The young man won his bride, but in the pleasure of her society forgot the passing of time until a letter from his foster-father told him the Jew had demanded payment of his

bond. The young wife not only generously provided her husband with more than enough money to discharge the debt, but with her maid followed him to Venice. Disguised as a lawyer, she pleaded the case of the foster-father in the court, where the Jew refused the payment of the bond, demanding instead the life of his adversary, and lost both, as did Shylock. In gratitude for the lawyer's services Giannetto offered her the money refused by the Jew, but like Portia she declined it, asking for his ring as her reward.

For the idea of the three caskets, Shakespeare is indebted to the "*Gesta Romanorum*," a collection of Roman stories, but in this instance it was the son of an Emperor who thus sought to find a bride.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

There is no subject in the school curriculum that requires greater latitude in the method of presentation than literature. This is particularly true of Shakespeare, where the interest of the class largely depends upon the enthusiasm of the teacher, her independence of the commentators, and the avoidance of technical discussions and criticisms.

Literary Appreciation. The development of an appreciation for and a desire to seek the best thoughts of the noblest minds is, of course, the fundamental purpose in including the study of literature in the school course. Such an achievement, however, requires infinite discretion and tact in presentation, and boundless enthusiasm for the subject on the part of the teacher. Above all else the thought must never be sacrificed to the word; the spirit lost in the letter.

It is regrettable that Shakespeare employed *I* instead of *me* as the object of the preposition in Antonio's letter to Bassanio, but it is a trivial thing and should be dismissed lightly. Attention should always be called to it, of course, but it may be charged to careless habits of speech acquired in childhood, or to rapid writing by a man whose thoughts were probably often far in advance of his pen. Compared with his great achievements, Shakespeare's errors in English and historical data are too insignificant to be considered, and the beginner should be made to feel this. Pupils of elementary and

secondary schools should be made *lovers of Shakespeare*, not critical students, and to this end all else may well be sacrificed.

Textual Study. Generally speaking, it is advisable for the teacher to give the first reading of each assignment of the Shakespearean text. At the close, attention should be called to such words or phrases as are likely to prove too difficult for independent study, the aptitude of the class determining the assistance necessary for their mastery. Care must be exercised that the word and phrase study do not become too detailed. It is never advisable to spend much time in clearing up obscure phrases; their meaning will gradually come with familiarity with the drama, particularly in the dialogue reading. The essential thing is that the class acquire an intelligent appreciation of each incident in the development of the plot and of the characters.

The first class-reading should never be interrupted for textual explanations. Such difficulties as were not previously disposed of should be postponed until the assignment has been finished.

The last few minutes of the recitation can be profitably devoted to an informal discussion of the characters, the plot interests, or the dramatic sequence. Such a period not only serves to promote ease of expression, but stimulates the class interest, and encourages the independence of thought essential to the development of individuality.

Reading by Parts. The advisability of beginning the dialogue study before the drama has been read through is a matter to be left to the discretion of the teacher. It does not seem generally advisable, however, to begin reading by parts until the pupils are familiar with the entire plot, otherwise they cannot intelligently appre-

hend their respective roles. Certainly no memorizing should be required until character assignments have been made, as it is impossible for pupils to appreciate the full beauty and significance of the lines unless the words are illuminated by the emotional content revealed through the action of mind on mind in the character interpretation.

Value of Dramatic Work. Every child possesses strong dramatic instincts, which should be cultivated for the purpose of stimulating the imaginative faculties and developing greater vocal and bodily expression. Assigned a role and given an opportunity "to act" invariably results in a more careful and thoughtful study of the lines than any other plan. In mere memorizing the child may only learn words; when assigned a part he absorbs ideas. At first pupils will not grasp the significance of many of the lines, but they will catch the general thought through the dramatic action, while the development of the emotional intensity, that comes from familiarity with the lines, will react upon their minds and enable them more readily to appropriate the thought than is ever possible from reading. Given a part the pupil will live it over and over again, thus unconsciously making his own some of the sublimest thoughts and noblest sentiments ever expressed.

SUGGESTIONS ON LITERARY INTERPRETATION

It is impossible in the limited space here allotted to give more than a few general suggestions on literary interpretation. Those offered are for the most part just broad working principles, designed to assist the teacher in obtaining a more intelligent reading of the lines. In some instances, however; specific suggestions have been given on the interpretations of a few of the more difficult passages.

Thought Reading. The reading of verse, even blank verse, offers many difficulties to children, who are usually disposed to read lines rather than thoughts. Much can be done to overcome this tendency by having them read rapidly around the class, each pupil reading one thought.

Where a passage contains many modifying clauses, it is well to have the student omit these until he has mastered the principal thought, then add the modifiers one by one. He will thus not only grasp the idea of subordinating modifying clauses to the main theme, but will more readily acquire the ability to differentiate values.

Inversion always offers difficulties, but these can usually be overcome by having the pupil transpose the sentence into its direct form. When the correct reading has been established, again invert the phrase or sentence, using the same inflections.

Vocal Interpretation. The teaching of no other subject, unless it is vocal music, requires as close observation and criticism of self on the part of the instructor as that of reading. This does not mean that the teacher should cultivate a studied nicety of speech or an affected quality of voice, but it does necessitate an appreciation of distinct enunciation, clear articulation, and a pleasantly modulated voice. Owing to a natural disposition to imitate, children unconsciously acquire the speech and voice of their teacher, this being especially true of her manner of reading.

It is commonly observed that the reading voice of the average child is distinguished by a quality entirely unknown to his speaking voice. This voice is generally acquired through an effort to obey the teacher's injunction to "read louder." In order to make himself heard, the pupil naturally takes a higher pitch, giving his tone a hard metallic quality, which makes his reading sound artificial. The carrying power of a voice no less than its beauty is largely dependable upon its resonance and overtones, qualities not to be found in the so-called "public school voice," which also lacks the flexibility necessary to variety in expression. The fact that a pupil cannot be heard is more often due to poor enunciation and faulty articulation than to the tone.

It is not sufficient to call the pupil's attention to his fault, he must be assisted in finding his correct pitch. One of the most satisfactory methods of accomplishing this is to have him read some simple sentence, which would naturally be read in the middle register; as, "I went home at noon," or "School is dismissed at three o'clock," at several different pitches. The suggestion, "Tell me that," is also helpful. It is advisable to impress upon the minds of the children that correct

tone placing is as essential to the quality of a speaking voice as to that used in singing. The principles learned in the music lesson can always be profitably applied in the reading class.

Poor articulation is one of the most prevalent faults to be noted in the average reading class. Except when due to physical conditions this is usually attributable to a disregard of vowel values, the slurring of certain consonant combinations, or the clipping of final letters. Shakespeare should never be employed for any purpose but the teaching of Shakespeare, but a little attention on the part of an observant teacher will enable her to locate the pupil's difficulty, and she can readily devise or select a mechanical exercise of full-voweled words, difficult consonant combinations, or troublesome final syllables, the practice of which will assist the pupil in overcoming his habit.

Several of Shylock's speeches in Act I are addressed to himself. This subjective quality of tone is very difficult for the amateur, but it can be acquired by resorting to the mechanical device of having the pupil take a reflective attitude (weight on heel of back foot, eye unfocused, as if looking inward) and say, "Let me see," endeavoring at the same time to recollect something he has really forgotten. The difference in tonal quality will readily be recognized.

Shylock's last speech in Act IV is likewise extremely difficult, but can be mastered if given with the idea of reading "down the breath." With the giving out of the breath the chest drops, producing a feeling of physical lassitude. The teacher, however, should never call a pupil's attention to the mechanics necessary to produce an effect, but work through the imagination by having him recall the sensation experienced at some time when

frightened or ill, thus awakening the true physical emotion which results in a corresponding vocal response.

Breathing. Unless the reading class follows the singing lesson or physical exercises it is advisable to devote at least two minutes to breathing exercises. This will serve to stimulate the thought and improve the voice work. When pupils get out of breath while reading or breathe in the wrong place, they should be cautioned to breathe at the end of the thought. Full, deep breathing is especially necessary in portraying the role of Gratiano, whose physical vigor is his most striking attribute.

Thought Analysis. The first essential to intelligent literary interpretation is careful thought analysis; an appreciation of the underlying motive which prompts each speech. For example, take Shylock's speech beginning with line 11, Act I, Scene II. He first reassures Bassanio, who has somewhat heatedly taken exception to his previous remark, then explains what he meant by "good." In the next sentence the cautious Shylock reveals his opinion of the reckless speculations of Antonio, who would be pronounced a "plunger" on the modern exchange. After enumerating the merchant's various argosies, all of which it is to be observed are bound for what were then considered far distant ports, he figuratively explains why he regards such ventures dangerous. Here, observing Bassanio's thoughtful expression, he again hastens to assure him that Antonio "is sufficient." Shylock does not address Bassanio when he says "Three thousand ducats;" he is thinking aloud as it were, showing that all the while he was talking his mind was occupied with the amount of the loan. Then note his cautious answer, which reveals him to be a man who takes no risks. In what striking con-

trast to the Jew's well-poised deliberation is the insolent positiveness of Bassanio's reply; one can almost feel Shylock's smiling tolerance of this youthful arrogance, as he says, with a subtile significance which is entirely lost on the other, "I will be assured I may."

Pupils will learn in a surprisingly short time to appreciate the value of such an analysis, and will enjoy the work if it is not permitted to become too analytical; but enthusiasm and spontaneity are always necessary to the success of an English class. Close thought analysis is especially necessary to avoid monotony or prevent ranting in the longer speeches of Shylock, whose interest in life has been narrowed to a single purpose. Naturally it colors his every thought and action, but ample opportunity for variety is afforded through fine shadings of tone and delicate inflections. This, however, requires not only an accurate knowledge of the meaning of each word, but the ability to differentiate clearly; as, for instance, between *hate* and *loathing*.

A satisfactory rendition of all descriptive passages necessitates clear visualizing and an appreciation of the cumulative effects of sequence in both thought and tone. Where the pupil's mental pictures seem to be blurred, the teacher should assist him in visualizing by a few pertinent questions.

Character Assignments. Before beginning the dramatic action the teacher should see that each pupil has a definite idea of the character he is to impersonate, and is able to form a distinct mental picture of it.

It is generally advisable on beginning the study of a character to make the assignment to the pupil qualified to give the best interpretation. Each member of the class, however, should be given an opportunity to impersonate as many roles as possible, the assignments being

made regardless of sex. Always encourage originality in impersonation, at the same time holding the pupil true to the generally accepted idea of the character.

In making assignments for the general class-room work, after the initial study, pupils can be benefited in innumerable ways if they are assigned characters for which they are not well suited. For example, let the shy, modest girl and diffident boy play Shylock or Gratiano, and the aggressive, conceited boy or girl take the role of Antonio or Bassanio.

Several pupils should be assigned the same role for each recitation, care being exercised in the dialogue arrangement that weak pupils do not play opposite. It is always advisable, if possible, to close the recitation with the strongest pupils impersonating the various roles.

In the dialogue work the teacher should insist from the first upon the intelligent attention of the character addressed to the one speaking. To listen with as keen attention and interest to a speech with which one is perfectly familiar as if hearing it for the first time is more difficult than to speak lines. The dramatic intensity of a scene is as dependent upon the responsiveness of the silent characters as upon the expression of the speaker, their sympathetic attention not only serving to stimulate his emotion, but adding to the vividness and reality of the play.

Observe the colons; they always indicate a movement, change of key, or some stage business.

All aphorisms, maxims, or great moral truths, as for example, "The quality of mercy is not strained," should be given to the front, never addressed to those on the stage, for their appeal is universal.

Inflections. The teacher should not require the pupils

to imitate her reading, but she should bring out the thought or obtain the inflection desired by questions. For instance, line 173, Act IV, is seldom read correctly: "The *quality of mercy* is not *strained*," not "the *quality of mercy*." The subject of the sentence is the whole phrase *quality of mercy*, not simply the word *mercy*. Care must be exercised not to make these drills too long; for expression is a matter of emotional and intellectual development and cannot be forced. The understanding and appreciation that gradually come from familiarity with the drama invariably result in tonal variety and better inflections. Close questioning is always necessary to bring out the subtle ideas in the "Mercy Speech," the emotional and intellectual value of which is lost unless the pupil's attention is directed to the well-balanced contrast between the spiritual and material attributes.

Often the substitution of another word, as *kindness* or *gentleness* for *mercy* in line 182, Act IV, will assist the pupil in acquiring the inflection necessary to the expression, and when the tonal quality is recognized it can be applied to the original word.

To give the full expressional value to a word, it is necessary not only to have a knowledge of its ordinary meaning, but an appreciation of all that is implied in the context. This is particularly true of verbs and adverbs; adjectives can be depended upon to take care of themselves.

Subordinate the personal pronouns, except where emphasis is necessary to mark a distinction. It is particularly necessary that this rule be observed in the usage of the possessive *my*, which in Shakespeare is read *mī*, except when contrasted with *thy*.

Speech Tunes. A drill in speech tunes, illustrating

that it is not what we say, but the way we say it which makes us agreeable or offensive, is a splendid preparation for the "Trial Scene." For example, take the following sentence:

Edith came home last year. Parts of the sentence of equal value.

Edith came home last year. Compels attention upon the person.

Edith came *home* last year. Fixes attention upon the place.

Edith came home *last year*. Sets out the particular year.

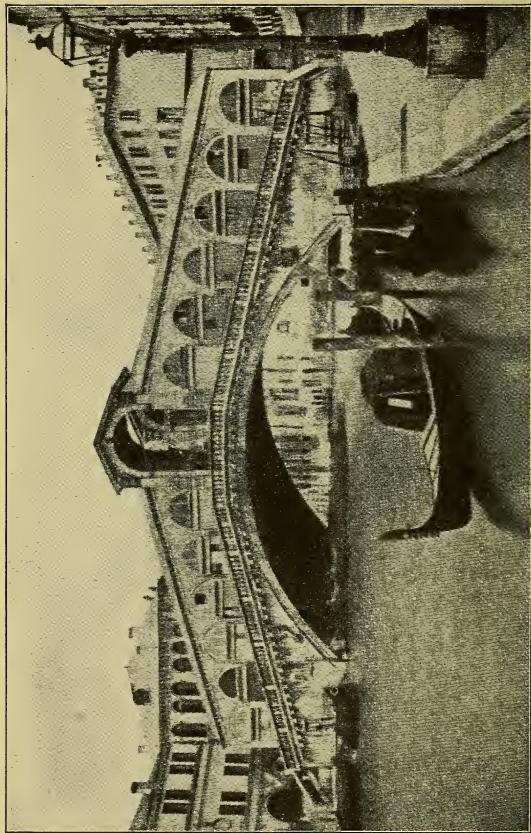
She came home *last year*. Emphasizes the time.

To illustrate the infinite variations and shades of thought which are conveyed through tone, ask the pupil a question to be answered with the monosyllable "yes" or "no," in anger, fear, pleasure, etc. For example: "Did you go to the woods Saturday?" Let the first "Yes" indicate he had a pleasant day; the second, that he went without permission and fears punishment; the third, that he did not enjoy himself; and the fourth, that he has disobeyed and is defiant.

This drill will be found especially helpful as a preparation for some of the speeches of Shylock and Gratiano in Act IV, where the latter often employs the Jew's words but with a very different effect.

The artificial quality which generally marks the reading of the opening phrase of Shylock's speech beginning with line 11, Act I, Scene II, can usually be overcome if the pupil is told to read "No, no, no, no," down the scale with regular intervals. It is simply a matter of applying a principle learned in the music lesson to the reading class. The introductory "Oh," being an expression of surprise, of course, takes an upward inflection.

In reading a series of clauses closely related, as in lines 30 to 32; the same scene, instead of cautioning the pupil "not to let his voice fall" at the end of each phrase, suggest that while reading one he think of the next, the mind always just preceding the voice as it does in running the scale. That he may better understand what is required have him count the seats in a row, or the windows in the room, and he will quickly note that the tone is suspended until he reaches the last object, particularly if he is suddenly stopped in the midst of his counting.



GRAND CANAL AND RIALTO, VENICE.

VENICE

Of all the cities of the world none is more fittingly associated with romance and story than Venice, the Paris of the middle ages. Built on many little islands, in a bay of the Adriatic sea, then as now it was unique among cities because of its canals, which serve as thoroughfares. Darting here and there on their waters, and adding to the picturesque scene, are many gondolas, that serve to make accessible every section of the city. Spanning the canals, and linking together the islands, are hundreds of bridges, of such exquisite design and perfect construction that they are still regarded as examples of architectural beauty.

It must have been a fascinating sight on a summer evening, in the long ago, to stand on one of those bridges and watch the parties of merrymakers gliding past in graceful gondolas, the beautiful gowns of the women hardly rivaling in the richness of their texture and brilliant coloring the costumes of the men.

Venice was then "Queen of the Sea," a great commercial power; a city of merchant princes, whose vessels traded in every port of the world. Although highly able business men, their interests did not all lie in commercial pursuits, but they manifested a rare appreciation of art in all of its forms. Every inducement was offered, not only by private citizens, but by city authorities, to encourage artists and skilled craftsmen to locate there.

The Venetians were proud of their city and took great delight in its improvement, particularly in the erection of beautiful buildings. As a result it is today noted for its wealth of art treasures, beautiful old palaces, and magnificent churches.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

THE DUKE OF VENICE,
THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } *suitors to Portia.*
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, }

ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*

BASSANIO, *his friend, suitor to Portia.*

SALANIO, }
SALARINO, } *friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*
LORENZO, }
GRATIANO, }
SALERIO, }

SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*

TUBAL, *a Jew, his friend.*

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *a clown, servant to Shylock.*

OLD GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*

LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*

PORTIA, *a rich heiress.*

NERISSA, *her waiting-maid.*

JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*

*Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Jailer,
Servants and other attendants.*

SCENE: Partly at Venice and partly at Belmont.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

5

During the period of the city's commercial supremacy, there lived in Venice a certain merchant named Antonio, in whom it was said the ancient Roman honor more appeared than in any other that drew breath in Italy. Although he was kind and generous, and was ever ready to assist a friend or aid the unfortunate, the merchant was not without enemies. The bitterest of these was Shylock, a rich Jew. Of his many friends, the one nearest to Antonio was his noble kinsman, Bassanio, one of the most highly favored and sought after gentlemen in Venice. His extravagant habits of living frequently plunged the young nobleman into financial difficulties, and more than once he had appealed to the generous Antonio, whose purse was ever open to his needs. The merchant had many friends, but he was especially popular with a jovial crowd of young Venetians. While always quiet and thoughtful, of late he had appeared even more serious than usual, and had abandoned all social gayeties, as if to avoid his friends, who often rallied him on his sadness.

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood, 10
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth, 15
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad; and every object
That might make me fear misfortune
To my ventures, out of doubt would make me sad.
But tell not me: I know, Antonio 20
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate 25
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then, you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you
are sad,
Because you are not merry: and 't were as easy 30
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble
kinsman,
Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company. 35

Salar. I would have stayed till I had made you
merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.

I take it, your own business calls on you

And you embrace the occasion to depart.

40

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say,
when?

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*]

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found
Antonio,

45

We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,

I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;

You have too much respect upon the world:

50

They lose it that do buy it with much care:

Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

55

Gra. Let me play the fool:

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come.

I tell thee what, Antonio—

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—

There are a sort of men whose visages

60

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,

And do a wilful stillness entertain,

With purpose to be dressed in an opinion

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,

As who should say “I am Sir Oracle,

65

And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!”

O my Antonio, I do know of these

That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing.

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:

70

I 'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time:
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more, 75
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I 'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commend-
able

In a neat's tongue dried.

[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*

Ant. Is that anything now? 80

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing,
more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as
two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you
shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you
have them, they are not worth the search. 85

Ant. Well, tell me now what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate, 90
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love, 95
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do, 100
Within the eye of honor, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight 105
The self-same way with more advised watch,
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth, 110
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both
Or bring your latter hazard back again 115
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done, 120
And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages: 125
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors. Had I but the means 130
To hold a rival place with one of them,

I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea:
Neither have I money nor commodity 135

To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be racked, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I, 140
Where money is; and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

On making inquiries the young men learned that the amount required could be obtained from but one man—Shylock, the Jew, who was shunned because of his business methods no less than by reason of his faith.

At that time the Jews of Venice, as of all other sections of Europe, suffered much injustice at the hands of the Christians. Not only were they despised and scorned, but they were denied the rights of citizenship and discriminated against in the courts. There were many laws in operation in the city especially designed to restrain the privileges and restrict the rights of the Jews, and seldom was justice meted out to a Hebrew when in litigation with a Gentile.

Deeply resenting the indignity and injustice visited upon his race, Shylock spent much of his time brooding over their wrongs, and quickly seized every opportunity to avenge them. He was one of the most extensive money-lenders in Venice, and the Christian merchants were frequently compelled to do business with him. Availing himself of all the privileges the law granted at such times, he mercilessly exacted from his debtors every cent coming to him the moment it was due, or else he had them cast into prison.

His life was dominated by two great passions, love of race and love of money; and they were so closely interwoven in his regard it would be difficult to determine which was the stronger.

During the long years he had borne unresistingly the taunts and gibes of his Christian associates on the Rialto, he had been

meditating revenge. It took various forms in his imagination at different times, but Antonio was always the central figure. When Bassanio asked for the loan, naming Antonio as surety, the Jew showed no surprise, nor gave any indication of the joy possessing his soul. But the thing he had hoped for had come to pass: the Christian was being delivered into his hands.

SCENE II. *Venice. A public place.*

Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well. 5

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary? 10

Shy. Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand moreover upon the Rialto, he hath 15
a third to Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is, too, the peril of waters, 20

winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be ²⁵ assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, ³⁰ walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [*Aside.*] How like a fawning publican he ³⁵ looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip, ⁴⁰
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursèd be my tribe, ⁴⁵
If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross ⁵⁰
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,

Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths. 55

Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom.—Is he yet possessed
How much you would? 60

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot, three months, you told me so.
Well then, your bond: and let me see,—but hear you;
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow 65
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf, 70
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—

Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio, 75
The Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath! 80

Shy. Three thousand ducats; 't is a good round
sum.

Three months from twelve,—then, let me see, the rate—

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time, and oft
In the Rialto, you have rated me 85

About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat, dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine, 90
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
“Shylock, we would have moneys:” you say so,
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard 95
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
“Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?” Or 100
Shall I bend low and in a bondman’s key,
With ’bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
“Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time 105
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I’ll lend you thus much moneys”?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not 110
As to thy friend; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty. 115

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit

Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me: 120
This is kind I offer.

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show:
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport, 125
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken 130
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, in faith; I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I'll rather dwell in my necessity. 135

Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are, 140
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?

A pound of man's flesh taken from a man 145
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favor I extend this friendship:
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not. 150

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,

And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I will be with you.

Ant.

Hie thee, gentle Jew.

[*Exit Shylock.*

The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind. 155

Ant. Come on: in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day. [*Exeunt.*

THE HEIRESS

Portia, the lady whom Bassanio sought for his wife, was an orphan and one of the richest noblewomen of her time. She lived at Belmont, a beautiful country seat not far removed from Venice, and had for her companion a gentlewoman named Nerissa.

Upon the death of her father, Portia came into possession of a vast estate, over which the terms of his will gave her entire control. Strangely enough, however, this same paper denied her the right to choose her husband.

The father knew his daughter's great wealth would attract many suitors, among them fortune hunters, whose motives Portia's nobility of character would prevent her from suspecting. To save her from these, he decided to intrust her destiny to fate, so devised a lottery whereby she should be won, believing only an honorable man would rightly read his meaning. He selected three beautiful caskets, one each of gold, silver, and lead, which were masterpieces of the metal worker's art. Each bore a quaint but appropriate inscription, designed to confuse rather than assist the suitors in their choice, and in one he placed his daughter's portrait. The one choosing this casket was, of course, entitled to claim the heiress for his bride.

At times Portia feared the outcome of this clever device, for of the many suitors who had come none had she desired for her husband. Yet she never doubted her father's wisdom, nor intended to disobey his commands. This last she could easily have done,

for he had confided to her his secret, but having promised not to betray it, she was too honorable to break her word, even to marry the man she loved.

Each day witnessed the arrival at Belmont of new suitors, who strove to excel one another in the splendor of their attire and magnificence of their retinues. It was a motley assembly, gathered from all quarters of the globe, the great hall of the palace presenting the spectacular appearance of a fete of the nations, as the swarthy Moors mingled with the blue-eyed Saxons and fair-haired Danes. More than one was compelled to do his wooing through an interpreter, but each was received with marked courtesy by the gracious Portia, although she was bored and weary of them all.

SCENE III. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.*

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that⁵ surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences and well pronounced.¹⁰

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty¹⁵ what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise

laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this ²⁰ reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one ²⁵ nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his mean- ³⁰ ing chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou ³⁵ namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appro- ⁴⁰ priation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say "If you will not have me, choose:" he hears ⁴⁵ merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these ⁵⁰ two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: ⁵⁵ but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should ⁶⁰ marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England? ⁶⁵

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can ⁷⁰ converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor? ⁷⁵

Por. That he hath a neighborly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed ⁸⁰ under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: ⁸⁵

when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the ⁹⁰ right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the Devil be within and that temptation ⁹⁵ without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their ¹⁰⁰ home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner ¹⁰⁵ of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's ¹¹⁰ time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio,—as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever ¹¹⁵ my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-Man.

How now! What news? 120

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good 125
a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he had the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. 130

While we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks
at the door. [*Exeunt.*]

CHOOSING THE CASKETS

A great flourish of cornets announced the arrival of the Prince and his party, who presented a most gorgeous appearance. All wore their native costumes, and the bright colors of their dress, and rich jewels were in vivid contrast to their black skins.

Portia pointed out "the several caskets to this noble Prince," saying:

"The one of them contains my picture, Prince:
If you choose that, then I am yours withal."

The Prince first paused before the gold casket, which bore the inscription, "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;" the silver one promised, "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;" and on the lead one was the warning, "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath." His choice alighted on the gold one, and on unlocking it he found a death's head, "within whose empty eye" there was a scroll. Unrolling it he read:

“All that glitters is not gold,—
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold,
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms unfold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgments old,
Your answer had not been unscroll’d
Fare you well; your suit is cold.”

The dusky nobleman took a hasty departure, much to Portia’s delight, soon to be followed by the Prince of Arragon.

Before being permitted to view the caskets, each suitor was “enjoin’d by oath” never to unfold to any one which casket it was he chose; if he failed of the right casket never in his life to woo a maid in way of marriage; and if he failed in fortune of his choice immediately to leave. Having taken the oath, the Prince thoughtfully pondered the inscriptions on the caskets. His choice was the silver one. On opening it he was most indignant to find “the portrait of a blinking idiot,” presenting a scroll bearing this verse:

“The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgment is
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow’s bliss.
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver’d o’er; and so was this.”

Hardly had the gates of Belmont closed on the haughty Spanish prince, when a forerunner announced the approach of a young Venetian nobleman.

ACT II

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying to me "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot," or "good Gobbo," or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." ⁵ My conscience says "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not," says my conscience. "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well;" "Fiend," say I, "you counsel well:" to be ruled by my conscience, ¹⁰ I should stay with the Jew my master; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend. My conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are ¹⁵ at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO, with a basket.

Shylock had amassed a fortune loaning money to the Christians at excessive interest, and was able to enjoy every luxury; but he denied himself even the comforts of life. With his daughter Jessica, his only child, he lived in the most penurious style, in a shabby old house in a mean quarter of the city, his only servant being a clownish lad, Launcelot Gobbo.

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [Aside.] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel²⁰ blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left;²⁵ marry at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. 'T will be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?³⁰

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [Aside.] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say 't, is an honest exceeding poor man.³⁵

Laun. Well, let his father be what a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Of Launcelot, an 't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very⁴⁵ staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentle-

man; but I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God⁵⁰
rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might
fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows⁵⁵
his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of
your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to
light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may,
but at length the truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are⁶⁰
not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about
it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your
boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.⁶⁵

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but
I am Launcelot, the Jew's man.

Gob. If thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh
and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard
hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin⁷⁰
than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows
backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than
I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost⁷⁵
thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a
present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but I have set up my rest to run
away. My master's a very Jew: give him a present!
give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you⁸⁰
may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I
am glad you are come: give me your present to one

Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man: to⁸⁵ him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other followers.

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making,⁹⁰ and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

[Exit a Servant.]

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here 's my son, sir, a poor boy,—⁹⁵

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve¹⁰⁰ the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins—

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father,¹⁰⁵ being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is—

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.¹¹⁰

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtained thy suit: Shylock thy master spoke with me this day, And hath preferred thee.

Bass. Go, father, with thy son.

115

Take leave of thy old master and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service; no; I
have ne'er a tongue in my head. Father, come; I 'll ¹²⁰
take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo.*]

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestowed,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteemed acquaintance: hie thee, go. ¹²⁵

Leon. My best endeavors shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Signior Bassanio!

Bass. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtained it. ¹³⁰

Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you
to Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough ¹³⁵
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior ¹⁴⁰
I be misconstrued in the place I go to.
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:

If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then, ¹⁴⁵

Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say Amen,
Never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing. 150

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends 155
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wracked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many⁵ a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip report be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbors believe

Jessica, Shylock's motherless daughter, found life very dull in her father's gloomy old house, and often longed to join the throngs of merrymakers who passed their home. Among these she had frequently observed the Gentile youth, Lorenzo. Attracted by Jessica's beauty, with the assistance of Launcelot, this young man finally succeeded in making her acquaintance, and later induced her to elope with him. To prevent discovery, Jessica dressed as a boy, and took with her enough of Shylock's money and jewels to buy herself the beautiful things for which she had always longed.

The marriage of his daughter to a Gentile increased Shylock's hatred of the Christians until his only thought was one of revenge. He had endured with seeming patience their scorn and mockery, but this last shame and humiliation they had put upon him was too much, and he determined to avenge the wrongs of himself and people by demanding his pound of flesh from Antonio, whose ships with their rich cargoes, one by one, had been reported lost.

she wept for the death of a third husband. But it ¹⁰
is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the
plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest
Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep
his name company!—

Salar. Come, the full stop. 15

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is,
he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil
cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of ²⁰
a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you,
of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That 's certain: I, for my part, knew the ²⁵
tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the
bird was fledged.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh ³⁰
and hers than between jet and ivory; more between
your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish.
But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any
loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bank- ³⁵
rupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the
Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon
the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call
me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend
money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his ⁴⁰
bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what 's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, ⁴⁵ and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what 's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, ⁵⁰ affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? ⁵⁵ if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian ⁶⁰ example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house and desires to speak with you both. ⁶⁵

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the Devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Salan., Salar., and Servant.*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter? ⁷⁰

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt⁷⁵ it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's⁸⁰ spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.⁸⁵

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.⁹⁰

Shy. I thank God, I thank God. Is 't true, is 't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good⁹⁵ news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting!¹⁰⁰ fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I 'll plague him; I 'll¹⁰⁵ torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a ¹¹⁰ bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. ¹¹⁵ I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*]

The noble Venetian, said to be approaching Belmont, was Bassanio. In those days when a gentleman paid court to a lady of Portia's rank, he did not go alone, but was accompanied by one or two companions and a number of servants. The journey was made in great state, the gentleman's attire, that of his companions, and the servant's liveries being as magnificent as his circumstances would permit. And it was the means to thus furnish him forth which compelled Bassanio to seek a loan from Antonio. At last his arrangements all completed, he bade his friends good-by, and accompanied by Gratiano set forth for Belmont, with an imposing train and many beautiful presents.

Portia was always gracious to her guests, but the warmth of her welcome to Bassanio far exceeded that extended to any of her previous suitors. Impatient to know his fate the young nobleman soon urged that he be permitted to take his oath and view the caskets; but fearing he might not choose aright, and not wishing to lose his company, Portia urged him to wait.

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.*

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and
Attendants.

Por. I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two

Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
 I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
 There's something tells me, but it is not love,
 I would not lose you; and you know yourself, 5
 Hate counsels not in such a quality.
 I speak too long; but 't is to peise the time,
 To eke it and to draw it out in length,
 To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose; 10
 For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Away, then! I am locked in one of them:
 If you do love me, you will find me out.
 Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
 Let music sound while he doth make his choice; 15
 Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
 Fading in music; that the comparison
 May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
 And watery death-bed for him.

Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.

SONG.

Tell me where is fancy bred, 20
 Or in the heart or in the head?
 How begot, how nourished?

Reply, reply.
 It is engendered in the eyes,
 With gazing fed; and fancy dies 25
 In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell:
 I 'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves: 30

The world is still deceived with ornament.
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
Thus ornament is but the guiléd shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf 35
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge 40
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meager lead,
Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. [*Aside.*] O love, 45
Be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rein thy joy; scant this excess.
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit.

Bass. What find I here? 50

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here 's the scroll, 55
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads.*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,

Be content and seek no new. 60
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave; 65
I come by note, to give and to receive.
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand, 70
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich: 75

That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of nothing; which, to term in gross,
Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised; 80
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed, 85
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now, 90
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;

Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you. 95

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio 's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time, 100
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My Lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me: 105
And when your honors mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one. 110
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved for intermission.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls; 115
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal. 120

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honored in your
marriage.

Gra. But who comes here?

What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio? 125

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO, *a messenger from Venice.*

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome. 130

Por. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your honor. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way, 135
He did intreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Saler. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*] 140

Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate. 145

Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio: what 's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece. 150

Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath
lost.

Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same
paper,
That steals the color from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution 155

Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

Bass.

O sweet Portia,

160

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
Than ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins; I was a gentleman:
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?

165

170

175

Saler.

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;

180

185

But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

190

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honor more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

195

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?

200

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend.
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let us hear the letter of your friend.

205

Bass. [*Reads.*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all
miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is
very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in
paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are
cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at
my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your
love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

215

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,

I will make haste: but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,

No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

220

[*Exeunt.*]

The marriage ceremony over, Bassanio and Gratiano bade their wives good-by, and started for Venice. As soon as they were gone, Portia summoned a trusted servant, giving him a letter to deliver to Doctor Bellario, a noted lawyer of Padua. From there he was to proceed to Venice to meet her, taking with him the "notes and garments" given him by the Doctor. She next announced to her household that during the absence of their husbands, she and Nerissa were going into retreat in a convent close by. It was her intention, however, as she had confided to Nerissa, to go to Venice. There gowned as a lawyer, and accompanied by Nerissa disguised as a clerk, she would enter the court and plead Antonio's case before the Duke.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venice. A court of justice.*

Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

Ant. Ready, so please your grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty 5
From any dram of mercy.

Ant. I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me 10
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am armed
To suffer with a quietness of spirit
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court. 15

Saler. He's ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our
face.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 't is thought 20

Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange,
Than is thy strange—apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture, 25
But, touched with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enough to press a royal merchant down 30
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew. 35

Shy. I have possessed your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom. 40
You 'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I 'll not answer that;
But, say, it is my humor: is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat 45
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned! What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
As there is no firm reason to be rendered, 50
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

55

A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love? 60

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee
twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach

65

And bid the main flood 'bate his usual height;

You may as well use question with the wolf

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;

You may as well forbid the mountain pines

To wag their high tops and to make no noise,

70

When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;

You may as well do any thing most hard,

As seek to soften that—than which what 's harder?—

His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,

Make no more offers, use no farther means,

75

But with all brief and plain conveniency

Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts and every part a ducat,

80

I would not draw them: I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering
none?

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

You have among you many a purchased slave,

Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,

85

You use in abject and in slavish parts,

Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens?—let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates 90
Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer
The slaves are ours. So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought, 't is mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law! 95
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this, 100
Come here to-day.

Saler. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger. 105

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage
yet!

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit 110
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me:
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Enter NERISSA dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord: Bellario greets your
grace. [Presenting a letter. 115

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's ax, bear half the keenness 120
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra. O, be thou damned, inexecrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.

Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my 125
bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend 130
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of
you

Go give him courteous conduct to this place. 135
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk. [*Reads.*] Your grace shall understand that
at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the
instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation
was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is 140
Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in contro-
versy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we
turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with
my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the
greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes 145
with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's
request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years
be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation;
for I never knew so young a body with so old a head.

I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial 150
shall better publish his commendation.

Duke. You hear the learnèd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, dressed like a Doctor of Laws.

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Por. I did, my lord. 155

Duke. You're welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por. I am informèd thoroughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew? 160

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law 165
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger, do you not?

Ant. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond?

Ant. I do. 170

Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven 175
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty, 180
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's 185
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render 190
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law, 195
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er, 200
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And, I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong, 205
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree establishèd:

'T will be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error, by the same example, 210
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 't is, most reverend doctor, here it is. 215

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for Venice!

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit; 220

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful;

Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenor. 225

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;

You know the law, your exposition

Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,

Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear 230

There is no power in the tongue of man

To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Por. Why then, thus it is: 235

You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law

Hath full relation to the penalty,

Which here appeareth due upon the bond. 240

Shy. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast:

So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge? 245

Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your
charge, 250

To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so expressed; but what of that?

'T were good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond. 255

Por. You, merchant, have you anything to say?

Ant. But little: I am armed and well prepared.

Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind 260

Than is her custom. It is still her use

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow

An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such a misery doth she cut me off. 265

Commend me to your honorable wife:

Tell her the process of Antonio's end;

Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;

And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a lover. 270

Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,

I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife 275

Which is as dear to me as life itself;

But life itself, my wife, and all the world,

Are not with me esteemed above thy life:

I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all

Here to this devil, to deliver you.

280

Shy. We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is
thine:

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shy. Most rightful judge!

Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his
breast:

285

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shy. Most learnèd judge! A sentence! Come,
prepare!

Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;

The words expressly are "a pound of flesh;"

290

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice.

295

Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learnèd
judge!

Shy. Is that the law?

Por. Thyselſ shall see the act:

For, as thou urgest justice, be assured

Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

300

Gra. O learnèd judge! Mark, Jew: a learnèd judge!

Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft!

305

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:

He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learnèd judge!

Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more 310
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple; nay, if the scale do turn 315
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeit-
ure. 320

Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel! 325
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?

Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shy. Why, then the Devil give him good of it! 330
I'll stay no longer question.

Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien 335
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state; 340
And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the Duke.

345

Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thy-
self:

350

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our
spirits,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:

355

For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;

The other half comes to the general state,

Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:

360

You take my house, when you do take the prop

That doth sustain my house; you take my life,

When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's
sake.

365

Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content:

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

370

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it. 375

Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock.*

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon: 380
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman;
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him. 385

[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal. 390

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid: 395
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute, 400
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for
your sake;

[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from
you: 405

Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!

I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this; 410

And now methinks I have a mind to it.

Bass. There's more depends on this than on the
value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,

And find it out by proclamation:

Only for this, I pray you, pardon me. 415

Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:

You taught me first to beg; and now methinks

You teach me how a begger should be answered.

Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow 420

That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their
gifts.

And if your wife be not a mad-woman,

And know how well I have deserved the ring,

She would not hold out enemy for ever, 425

For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*]

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:

Let his deservings and my love withal

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him; 430

Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house. Away! make haste.

[*Exit Gratiano.*

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.

[*Exeunt.* 435

THE RETURN TO BELMONT

Obedient to Bassanio's request, Gratiano hastened to overtake the Doctor, to whom he delivered the message and presented the ring. Portia then asked him to show her clerk "old Shylock's house," that he "might give him the deed and let him sign it." At the time of their betrothal Nerissa had presented Gratiano with a ring, which she now succeeded in persuading him to give her in payment of her services on behalf of his friend.

Their business finished, Portia and Nerissa started for Belmont, where they were soon joined by their husbands and Antonio. The greetings were hardly over, before the young women discovered their husbands no longer wore their betrothal rings, and each wife indignantly demanded an explanation. Bassanio said he was compelled to give his to the Doctor, who would accept no other fee; while Gratiano, with much disgust, claimed to have presented his to "a kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy, the judge's clerk." Portia and Nerissa pretended to feel deeply wronged and accused their husbands of having deceived them.

Feeling he was responsible for the misunderstanding, the gentle Antonio endeavored to restore peace. Seeing how deeply he was grieved, each wife produced her ring, explaining how she came to have it. Portia then gave to Antonio a letter, wherein he learned that three of his argosies had "richly come to harbor suddenly." Again all was peace and happiness, and there was much laughter about the rings, and the husbands who did not know their wives, the merry Gratiano swearing:

"while I live, I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring."

GLOSSARY

Antonio (ăn-to'ne-o)	Lorenzo (lo-ren'zō)
Balthasar (bal-thā'zār)	Montferrat (môn-fer-rä')
Bassanio (bă-să'nī-o)	Nerissa (ne-ris'sä)
Bellario (ba-lä'ri-o)	Portia (pôr'shiä)
Belmont (bēl'mont)	Rialto (re-äl'to)
Diana (dī-an'ä)	Salanio (sa-lä'nī-o)
Gobbo (gob'bō)	Salarino (sä-la-re'no)
Gratiano (gra-she-ä'no)	Salerio (sä-ler'ī-ō)
Jessica (jes'i-kä)	Shylock (shi'lock)
Launcelot (lăn'ce-lot)	Sibylla (si-bi'lä)
Leonardo (lē-on-ar'dō)	Tubal (tū'bal)

Ay (ī), always so pronounced when used as an affirmative answer.

STUDY HELPS

ACT I, Scene I

1. Which character do you like best in this scene? Why?
2. Why is Antonio sad?
3. Can you name two other young men between whom there existed as strong a friendship as between Antonio and Bassanio? Explain the following lines considered in their relation to the context:

And such a want-wit sadness makes of me. (6)

As they fly by them with their woven wings. (14)

Upon the fortune of this present year. (25)

You grow exceeding strange. (43)

By something showing a more swelling port. (91)

And from your love I have a warranty. (96)

Lie all unlocked to your occasions. (103)

To wind about my love with circumstance. (118)

Make a list of all unfamiliar words, observing their meaning and use in the text.

ACT I, Scene II

1. Comment on the manner of both Bassanio and Shylock. Who appears to the better advantage? Why? Why does Shylock deliberate so long about the loan? How is Bassanio impressed by his deliberation? To what does he attribute it? Why does Shylock say, "Who is he comes here?"

2. What is your impression of Antonio in this scene?

3. Which of these men appears to the best advantage in this scene? Why?

Explain the following lines considered in their relation to the context:

Shall be bound. (4)

Means are in supposition. (13)

Will bethink me. (26)

Low simplicity. (37)

Feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. (41)

My bargains and my well-won thrift. (44)

Near guess of my memory. (49)

Raise up the gross. (50)

Will furnish me. (53)

Ripe wants of my friend. (58)

Shames you have stained me with. (118)

Express'd in the condition. (128)

Dwell in my necessity. (135)

Make a list of all the words with which you are unfamiliar in this chapter and define them.

ACT I, Scene III

1. How does Portia feel about her father's will? Give the reasons for your opinion.

2. How does Nerissa regard the various suitors?

3. How do you regard this plan of the father for choosing a husband for his daughter?

Explain the following lines considered in their relation to the context:

- Little body is aweary of this great world. (1)
 Competency lives longer. (9)
 Level at my affections. (37)
 Unmannerly sadness in his youth. (48)
 Sin to be a mocker. (55)
 If a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering. (58)
 Converse with a dumb-show. (71)
 Neighborly charity. (77)
 Make shift to go without him. (88)
 Dote on his very absence. (108)
 My foolish eyes looked upon. (116)
 Make a list of all unfamiliar words, noting their meaning and use in the text.

ACT II, Scene I

1. What do you learn about the character of Shylock from Launcelot?
 2. Why does Bassanio engage Launcelot?
 3. Why does Gratiano wish to accompany Bassanio to Belmont?
 4. Which character do you like best in this scene? Why?
- Make a list of all unfamiliar words, and study their meaning and use in the text.

ACT III, Scene I

1. Comment freely upon the characters of Shylock and Tubal.
 2. Describe Shylock's state of mind.
 3. What is your feeling toward him as he appears in this scene?
 4. What is your opinion of Jessica?
- Explain the following lines considered in their relation to the context:
- Yet it lives there unchecked. (2)
 Crossing the plain highway of talk. (11)
 Hindered me half a million. (46)
 Hath an argosy cast away. (89)
- Make a list of all unfamiliar words, and study their meaning and the sense in which they are employed in the text.

ACT III, Scene II

1. Which character do you like best in this scene? Why?
2. What quality do you admire most in Portia, Nerissa, Bassanio, and Gratiano, as far as you have read?
3. Quote the lines you like best in this scene.

Explain the following words considered in their relation to the context:

Hate counsels not in such a quality. (6)

My eye shall be the stream

And watery death-bed for him. (18)

So may the outward shows be least themselves. (30)

Fair Portia's counterfeit. (51)

Make a list of all unfamiliar words, and study their meaning and use in the text.

ACT IV, Scene I

1. Which character do you admire the most in this scene? Why? For whom do you feel the greatest sympathy? Why?

2. What is your opinion of the punishment inflicted upon Shylock?

3. What is your impression of Gratiano?

4. How do you think Portia feels toward Shylock? Why?

5. How does the Duke regard him? Give your reasons.

Quote your favorite lines in this scene. In the play.

Which character do you admire the most in the play? Why?

Explain the following lines considered in their relation to the context:

Strange—apparent cruelty. (22)

Glance an eye of pity. (28)

Made the ewe bleat for the lamb. (68)

Crave the law.-(195)

Wrest once the law to your authority. (204)

Well-deserving pillar. (229)

Find it out by proclamation. (414)

Note all unfamiliar words, studying their meaning with particular attention to their use in the text.

NOTES

ACT I, Scene I

1. **In Sooth**, truly or in truth.
10. **Signiors**, in the sense of lords or magistrates. **Burghers**, citizens.
15. **Forth**, frequently used by Shakespeare in the sense of *out*.
50. **Respect**, concern or consideration.
61. **Cream** and **mantle**, that is, they assume a manner and expression which conceals their ignorance, and united with their silence gives those about them the impression that they possess a wisdom too deep for the understanding of an ordinary mind.
64. **Conceit**, here used in the sense of thought, conception, judgment.
65. **Oracle**, a very wise person, a prophet.
79. **Neat's**, calf's.
105. **Self-same flight**, that is, one which was made to shoot the same distance, arrows being formed for shooting at various distances just as guns are.
121. **Prest**, ready, prepared.
123. Meaning she possessed other graces than beauty of person.
127. The wife of Marcus Brutus, the Roman senator.
131. **With** in the sense of *as*.

ACT I, Scene II

1. **Ducat** was a gold coin, the value of which varied, but three thousand would be equivalent to about \$25,000 today.
6. **Stead** used at that time in the sense of *assist* or *aid*: "**May you stead me?**" therefore means *can you assist me?*
12. **Good** here employed in the commercial sense with reference to the financial responsibility. We sometimes say of a man *he is good for it*, meaning he can *afford* it.
13. **In supposition**, not known, uncertain.
15. In ancient Venice there were three distinct places commonly spoken of as the Rialto: namely, the island at the further side of the Grand Canal; the Exchange erected on that island,

and within which the city's chief financial transactions were conducted; and the Ponte de Rialto, which connected the island with St. Mark's quarter. This fact doubtless explains why Shakespeare employs *in*, *on*, and *upon* when speaking of the Rialto.

17. **Squandered**, scattered.

29. In Shakespeare's time Christ was referred to as the **Nazarite**, rather than the *Nazarene*, the latter term having been first employed in the King James version of the Bible, published in 1611.

35. **Publican** was the name given to tax-collectors, all of whom were detested by the people, particularly the Jews to whom they showed little mercy.

36. **For**, in the sense of *because*.

39. **Usance**, **usury**, **upon advantage**, and **excess** possess the same significance as the word *interest*, when employed to indicate the premium charged for the use of money. In Shakespeare's day there was no law establishing a legal rate of interest as now, when we refer to an excessive rate or premium on a loan as usury. As the chief money-lenders of that period were Jews, the business was held in ill-repute by all Gentiles, who felt to pay or charge a friend for the use of money was a mark of Judaism, and not consistent with the conduct of a Christian gentleman.

40. **Upon the hip**, a wrestling phrase commonly used in the poet's day.

53. **Soft**, an old expression employed in the sense we now use, *wait, hold on, not so fast*.

54. **Rest you fair**, a form of apology of practically the same significance as the modern *beg your pardon*.

59. **Possessed**, informed.

68. Shylock takes much pleasure in recalling the clever trick by which Rebecca deceived Isaac, thus winning for Jacob, her favorite son, the blessing which rightfully belonged to Esau, his elder brother.

80. **Falsehood**, trickery, knavery.

88. **Sufferance**, the Venetian senate had passed an edict forbidding all Jews from appearing on the Rialto without wearing a red cross embroidered upon the shoulder of their coats, or a yellow strip in their caps.

90. **Gaberdine** was a long, loose outer garment.

93. **Go to**, a common exclamation, which, like our *come on* or *get out*, took its whole meaning from the inflection of the utterance.

95. In the poet's day the word **rheum** applied to any discharge of nose, eyes, or lungs. Here it plainly means spittle.

112. **Breed**, here means interest; that which came from or was bred by the principal.

114. **Break**, fails.

119. **Doit**, an old Dutch coin, worth less than our penny.

129. The Hebraic law forbade the Israelites to torture any living creature, but to treat all with kindness, loving their neighbors as themselves; for this reason the Jews have always taken an exception to the character of Shylock, considering it to be a libel on their race.

135. **Dwell**, abide, live, continue.

143. **Break his day**, then a common phrase for breach of contract.

149. **So**, in the sense of *very well*, was not uncommon at that time.

155. **Fearful**, doubtful.

ACT I, Scene III

1. **Troth** is an old form of *truth*.

8. **Superfluity comes sooner**, meaning those who live in luxury earlier *acquire* white hair. The verb *come* is frequently used in the sense of *acquire*.

10. **Sentences**, maxims.

18. **Blood** has the same meaning here as **temper**, and both refer to the *passions* or *impulses* generally.

21. **Reasoning**, conversation.

24. The second **will** refers to the legal paper in which the owner expresses his wishes regarding the disposition of his property after his death.

27. **Holy men**, meaning *honorable* and *noble minded*.

37. **Level**, guess or determine.

40. **Appropriation** in the sense of *addition*.

47. Refers to Heraclitus, a wise man of ancient times, known as the "weeping philosopher," because he mourned over the follies of mankind.

70. **Proper**, handsome.
71. **Dumb-show**, pantomime.
80. **Seal** is to sign. A person giving a bond *sealed to* and his surety, the person who signed it with him, *sealed under*.
87. **An** used in the poet's day in the sense of *if*.
102. **Sort**, manner.
103. **Father's imposition**, conditions imposed by the father's will.
104. When Apollo fell in love with **Sibylla** he offered to grant any request she might make. She asked to live as many years as she had grains of sand in her hand. The request was granted, but as she had not asked to retain her beauty she doubtless derived little satisfaction from the years.
105. **Diana**, identified with the Greek Artemus, was the daughter of Jupiter and Latona and twin sister of Apollo. She lived in the forest and about fountains, had authority over the moon, and presided over the hunt.
121. **Four**, doubtless an error as *six* have been mentioned.
127. **Condition**, disposition, temper.
128. Devils always represented as of dark color.
129. **Shrive me**, hear my confession.

ACT II, Scene I

20. **Sand-blind**, vision not entirely gone. We sometimes use the expression *stone-blind*, meaning a person cannot see.

31. **Master**, in the poet's day, was a title of respect, and never applied to the serving class; hence Gobbo shrinks from giving it to his son, although unknowingly he keeps calling him *master*.

52. It was customary for young people to address old men and women as *father* and *mother*, in that day, so Gobbo still fails to recognize his son.

68. Launcelot kneels with his back to his father, who mistakes his hair for a beard.

78. **I have set up my rest to run away**, a phrase frequently used in the sense of making up one's mind or forming a resolution.

94. **Gramercy**, many thanks, from the French *grand merci*.

103. **Cater-cousins**, distant cousins. Gobbo apparently wishes

to imply that there is little attachment between Launcelot and the Jew.

106. **Frutify**, fructify, meaning he will relate all the particulars.

147. Men then wore their hats during dinner, but in genteel circles, when grace was being pronounced, it was customary to remove the head covering and hold it before the face.

ACT III, Scene I

4. **Goodwins**, the Goodwin Sands, which lay off the eastern coast of Kent, England.

9. **Knapped**, nibbled or gnawed. Ginger was a favorite delicacy of old ladies of that period.

15. That is, hurry on with your story, don't stop to think of words.

26. Refers to Jessica having worn boy's clothing.

32. **Rhenish wines**, white wines, so called from the river Rhine.

37. **Smug**, alert, brisk, gay.

110. The **turquoise** was thought to possess certain magical properties for which it was as highly prized as for its beauty.

ACT III, Scene II

7. **Peise**, from a French word meaning to weigh. It is here used figuratively in the sense of retard; putting a weight on a thing in motion naturally makes it go slower.

16. Refers to the legend of the swan, which is said to sing while it is dying.

31. **Still**, in the sense of *always*.

34. **Guiled**, seductive, beguiling.

39. **Midas** besought the God Bacchus to turn whatever he touched into gold. The request was granted, but all of his food turning to gold while he was eating, he implored Bacchus to withdraw the favor.

88. The lord of a property is the owner.

104. That is, you are so happy you cannot wish to take any joy from me.

129. **Very**, true.

- 152. **Shrewd**, in the sense of painful.
- 172. **Mere**, absolute, entire.
- 183. **Confound**, ruin, destroy.
- 198. The Venetian **ducat**, in the poet's day, was equivalent to about \$1.53, thus three thousand ducats would have been equal to \$4,600, the purchasing value of which would have been six times what it is in our day.

ACT IV, Scene I

- 5. **Uncapable**, incapable.
- 6. **Dram**, a very minute quantity.
- 8. **Qualify**, soften, moderate.
- 11. **Envy's reach**, malice, hatred.
- 21. **Remorse**, pity, compassion.
- 23. **Where** for *whereas*.
- 27. **Moiety** literally is one third, but is employed by Shakespeare to express any portion.
- 30. **Royal merchant**, indicates Antonio's great wealth and social standing.
- 36. **Possessed**, in the old sense of *informed, advised*.
- 44. **Humor**, frequently employed in the poet's time when referring to any whim or caprice for which no reason could be offered.
- 47. **Baned**, poisoned, killed with ratsbane.
- 48. This may refer to a pig's head as roasted for the table and sometimes served with an apple in its mouth; or to the squealing of a pig.
- 64. **Question**, reason, argue.
- 66. **Main flood**, high tide.
- 144. The plea is apparently a request that his wisdom be not underestimated because of his youth.
- 158. **Question**, controversy, dispute.
- 166. **Impugn**, oppose, literally meaning that there is no law which meets the present situation.
- 167. **Within his danger**, within his power.
- 169. **Confess**, acknowledge.
- 203. **Truth**, justice, or possibly honesty.
- 210. **Error**, wrong, injustice.
- 220. **Forfeit**, forfeited; that is, the penalty can be claimed.

242. **More elder**, the double comparative is frequently to be noted in Shakespeare.
247. **Balance** though singular in form is used in a plural sense.
261. **Still her use**, meaning it is her *custom*.
268. **Speak me fair in death**, speak well of me when dead.
294. **Confiscate**, confiscated.
341. **In the mercy**, we would now say *at the mercy*.
377. Meaning *twelve* men to condemn him.
380. **Of pardon**, an expression very common at that time.
388. **In lieu thereof**, in return or consideration of which.
390. **Cope** in the sense of reward; meaning, "We freely reward your courteous efforts therewith."
423. **And if**, frequently used by writers of the poet's time where we would employ *if* only.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STAGING

Although certain traditions govern the staging of the Shakespearean dramas, every actor exercises his individuality through personal preference in the matter of details, which explains the differences to be observed in the business, properties and stage effects in every production.

The directions offered are designed as a general guide for the teacher who has never witnessed a production of the drama, or who has had little experience in the staging of plays.

The following rules should be observed in all stage productions, whether classic or modern:

In entering, the character speaking generally comes second, advancing on the foot away from the audience.

Keep the foot nearest the audience back. Only low comedy characters, servants, and soldiers stand with the feet parallel.

Kneel on the knee next to the audience.

In walking lines, the speaker always sets the pace.

In crossings, the character speaking passes in front, setting the pace, the other person yielding his place and taking that of the speaker.

The weight should always be on the forward foot, except in attitudes of meditation or defiance.

Mobs should be arranged in small groups with leaders, who in turn should be under a general leader. This arrangement will lessen the individual responsibility, and prevent the huddling which results from confusion.

Have pupils pace walking lines, those on which they cross, enter and exit, until they learn to step on the strong beat. This mastery of rhythm not only insures stronger entrances, exits and crossings, but will give greater ease and self-confidence.

If a character rises or sits while speaking, the action should come on the strong word in the sentence.

Always observe a crescendo and diminuendo in shouts, murmurs, etc., of the mob.

The letters R and L (right and left) indicate the position of players on the stage, facing the audience. Down stage is toward the audience, Up stage is from the audience. L is lower, and U is upper. C is center, and R C is right center and L C is left center. The numbers 1, 2, and 3, refer to the entrances on the left and right of stage, R 1 and L 1 being the entrances nearest the audience on the right and left sides, and R 3 and L 3 are the entrances farthest up stage.

The numbers refer to the lines of text, and the directions to the business or action which should accompany them.

ACT I, Scene I

Stone bench R C.

Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio R 2. Characters should enter in natural groups, not in ranks or files. Salarino should have his right hand on Antonio's shoulder or they may be arm in arm, and Salanio is just a step behind and to the R of Antonio. Salarino and Antonio R C, Salanio R.

32. All laugh slightly at the conclusion of this speech.

35. Salanio crosses to R C, and Antonio drops into his place on R.

40. Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo and Gratiano R I. Bassanio immediately crosses to Antonio, they shake hands, then he crosses to C and acknowledges greeting of Salarino. During their speeches Lorenzo and Gratiano shake hands with Antonio.

44. Exeunt Salarino and Salanio L 2, merrily.

45. Bassanio and Lorenzo pass to L C together.

49. Gratiano C and Antonio R C and Bassanio and Lorenzo L C.

71. Joins Lorenzo L C.

79. Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo L 3, laughing.

80. Antonio R C, watching them exit.

81. Bassanio, who has been watching them off C, comes down stage to Antonio on R C.

89. Bassanio C, hesitates a moment, then speaks deliberately, thoughtfully.

99. Tries to put him at his ease.

122. Bassanio does not look at Antonio during descriptive portion of this speech, for he is striving to visualize a memory, and is fixing his attention not upon his companion but upon the picture he is trying to describe.

130. Here addresses Antonio.

142. Exit Bassanio L 2, Antonio R 2.

ACT I, Scene II

Enter Bassanio and Shylock from R 2.

1. Shylock R C.

2. Bassanio L C.

19. Land-thieves, Bassanio's expression and slight movement

here indicate he does not understand Shylock's meaning. This calls forth a change of tone and the explanation, "I mean pirates."

21. Sufficient, Shylock here turns and takes a step or two to the right, as if considering the loan.

24. On completing this speech, Bassanio goes a little farther up L.

26. May I speak with Antonio, Shylock down R here turns slightly toward Bassanio, who is still up L; speaks rather loudly.

27. Bassanio remains up L C, and answers rather indifferently.

28. Care must be taken that Shylock is not rude here. He is carried away by his emotion, then recollecting himself turns to Bassanio with, "What news on the Rialto?" After noting Antonio's approach goes to R.

Antonio enters L 3, Bassanio meets him up L.

34. Shylock down R, back towards Antonio and Bassanio, glances at former over shoulder.

40. Upon the hip, touches money bag hanging on belt at right with left hand.

47. Bassanio and Antonio going down L.

48. Shylock crosses to R C. Bassanio on L, Antonio L C.

53. Shylock's surprise feigned. Makes an oriental bow.

56. Antonio very cold and distant. "Is he yet possessed," addressed to Bassanio, a noticeable change in his tone.

63. Thoughtfully, as if calculating, then suddenly remembering what Antonio said directly addresses him, "But hear you."

72. Antonio here impatiently interrupts the Jew, his tone being almost a sneer.

76. Shylock hears Antonio's remark and turns away.

83. Antonio impatient here, he and Bassanio come down L C. Shylock has walked slowly to R, then down R, as if considering figures on the ground.

84. Shylock crosses to C.

88. Indicates yellow strip in cap.

108. Haughtily, with side of body turned toward Shylock. On completing speech turns to Bassanio, and both start as if going off L.

116. Shylock R C stops them.

122. Approaches Shylock.

125. Shylock takes this lightly. "In the condition," Shylock

here hesitates, as if he were thinking what the condition should be.

134. Bassanio approaches Antonio, placing his hand on his arm. Action increases here, moving rapidly to the close of the scene.

140. Shylock turns to right in giving this aside. "Pray you," addresses Bassanio.

152. Moves off R, exit 2. Antonio and Bassanio exit L 3.

ACT I, Scene III

Caskets R C, concealed by curtains. Seat on L C.

Portia and Nerissa may be seated when curtain rises or may enter from L 2. Portia is on L and Nerissa R, if seated. If they enter, Portia crosses to R C, Nerissa remaining on L C.

35. If standing Portia here crosses to seat on L, Nerissa taking her place on R. Sits down when pronouncing the word "level." Nerissa remains standing, but changes her position, sometimes leaning on the back of the seat when addressing Portia, and occasionally walking about. The beauty of this scene lies in its simplicity and ease.

54. Portia here holds out her hand indicating the height of the Frenchman, who is anything but tall.

55. "In truth," pulls Nerissa down beside her.

93. Indicates the caskets.

98. Nerissa here rises, going down R toward C.

104. Portia rises on "I will die as chaste as Diana."

110. Nerissa here approaches Portia.

114. "It was Bassanio," turns toward Nerissa. Realizing she has revealed more than she intended, "as I think," is given slowly and thoughtfully, looking away from Nerissa.

Servant enters L. All exit L 2, Portia last with her arm about Nerissa.

ACT II, Scene I

Launcelot runs on stage from Shylock's house L 2; stops suddenly C, draws himself up, turns his head quickly first to R then L. Taps heart every time he mentions his "conscience." These movements should be large and sweeping.

2. Points with thumb over left shoulder toward Shylock's house.

2. "Elbow," points to right elbow.

5. "Run away," short staccato-like movements on toes toward R 1, as if he were going to run.

7. "Budge not," holds himself stiff and rigid, military attitude at attention. "Budge," gives a movement as if about to dash forward. "Budge not," same as before.

16. Dashes forward to R 1, always runs on toes, looking back over left shoulder at Shylock's house, runs into old Gobbo and then runs backward to L C. Gobbo enters R 1, his cane in right hand with which he is feeling the way before him, has a basket on his left arm.

24. Turns him toward the R.

25. Turns him to the L.

27. Turns him clear around.

48. Holds his face close to his father.

52. Stoops and turns his face upward so it is right under Gobbo's eyes.

63. Kneels with his back toward his father. Launcelot regards this as a huge joke.

74. Throws his arms around the old man's legs, nearly pulling him over.

81. Launcelot takes his father's right hand and rubs it over the fingers of his left hand, which he has spread over his left side.

87. Enter Bassanio R 1, with Leonardo and other servants.

91. Exit servant L 3.

92. Gets behind his father and pushes him toward Bassanio.

95. Gobbo bobs, and pushes his son forward.

97. Launcelot bobs and thrusts his father forward. They continue to do this until Bassanio says "One speak for both."

121. Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo R 1. Launcelot's movements always follow rhythm of text.

122. Bassanio C.

126. Exeunt Leonardo R 1. Enter Gratiano L 1.

159. Exeunt Gratiano R 1, Bassanio L 3.

ACT III, Scene I

Enter Salanio L 1, Salarino R 1, meet in C.

20. Enter Shylock from R 1, hurriedly as if chased by a crowd, quickly crosses stage to L C. Salanio and Salarino, who have started toward R 1, call to him after he has passed them.

22. Salanio R C, Salarino R.
23. Crosses to C.
30. Crosses to Shylock.
42. Salarino crosses to R. C.
63. Crosses to L.
64. Enter a servant R 1.
67. Enter Tubal R 1.
68. Exeunt Salanio, Salarino, and servant R 1.
69. Shylock meets Tubal L C.
85. Shylock bowed with grief and misery here.
88. Shylock clutches Tubal's coat, his fingers nervously clasping and unclasping. On "What, What, What," read up the scale, regular intervals to give variety.
91. Raises hands, shoulder high, palms out, and turns eyes slightly upward, then clasps hands. "Is't true, is't true?" again addresses Tubal.
96. Shows great joy, exults in his good fortune. Observe how carefully the emotion of the scene is balanced by Tubal telling Shylock first about his daughter and then about Antonio.
109. Use care here. Shylock prized his turquoise not for its value but for its associations and significance. Much superstition was attached to this stone which was supposed to have the power to reconcile husband and wife.
119. Exeunt Shylock L 1, Tubal R 1.

ACT IV, Scene I

Duke and Magnificoes discovered seated on L when curtain rises. Table L C, where Nerissa later sits. Antonio and Bassanio enter from L 1. Enter Shylock R accompanied by another Jew of about the same age and similarly attired. Gratiano, Salerio, and others are gathered up R. Portia enters from R 3, as also does Nerissa.

2. Antonio takes a step forward bowing to the Duke.
16. Shylock enters slowly and with great dignity. Bows low to the Duke whom he treats with marked deference throughout the scene. Stands R C.
35. Absolute silence here.
36. Lines spoken with great dignity. When referring to his oath "our holy Sabbath," Shylock raises his right arm, palm

upward, his head reverently bowed. "To have the due and forfeit of my bond," slowly drops his arm and lifts his head.

83. Shylock always speaks respectfully, but firmly.

97. "Shall I have it?" bows low to the Duke.

113. Nerissa enters R hands letter to clerk; clerk bows and hands it to the Duke. During this action Shylock kneels and begins to sharpen his knife on the sole of his boot.

128. Shylock rises and turning contemptuously away from Gratiano, speaks to his Jewish friend.

Nerissa remains standing while letter is read then seats herself at table and begins examining papers and books. All rise but the Duke when Portia enters. She should be dressed in a black cassock with small red buttons up the front from the hem to the collar and a student's red gown and cap. She should stand throughout the scene.

161. Shylock moves down R C and Antonio down L C.

185. Shylock reverently bows his head when Portia says "liketh God's," but none of the Christians do.

195. Shylock shows elation here, his excitement and satisfaction increasing to the climax.

207. Shylock's face expresses great joy and some astonishment.

215. Shylock draws forth the bond with great haste and much excitement.

245. "So says the bond," points to the bond with his knife.

252. Takes the bond from Portia; feigning to hunt for it, but knows it is not there.

287. Knife in right hand, balance in left, Shylock is ready to rush at Antonio. "Most learned judge," bows to Portia; "A sentence," respectfully bows and addresses Duke; "Come, prepare," hurriedly crossing to Antonio.

288. Portia steps forward, arresting Shylock by uplifted right hand, speaking with great calmness and dignity. "This bond," indicates bond held in left hand with index finger of right.

295. Shylock staggers backward, drops the knife and balance.

296. Gratiano nudges Shylock with his elbow, while tauntingly repeating the latter's words. Care must be exercised that his speeches never seem to be addressed to the court, but to his friends and the Jew.

297. In a choked tone of amazement, can hardly speak.

302. Shylock here seems almost dazed, as if he hardly understood what is taking place about him. Addresses the Duke to whom he respectfully bows.

305. Portia stops the advance of Bassanio by her left hand.

329. Portia gives Shylock his bond with a sweep of the hand.

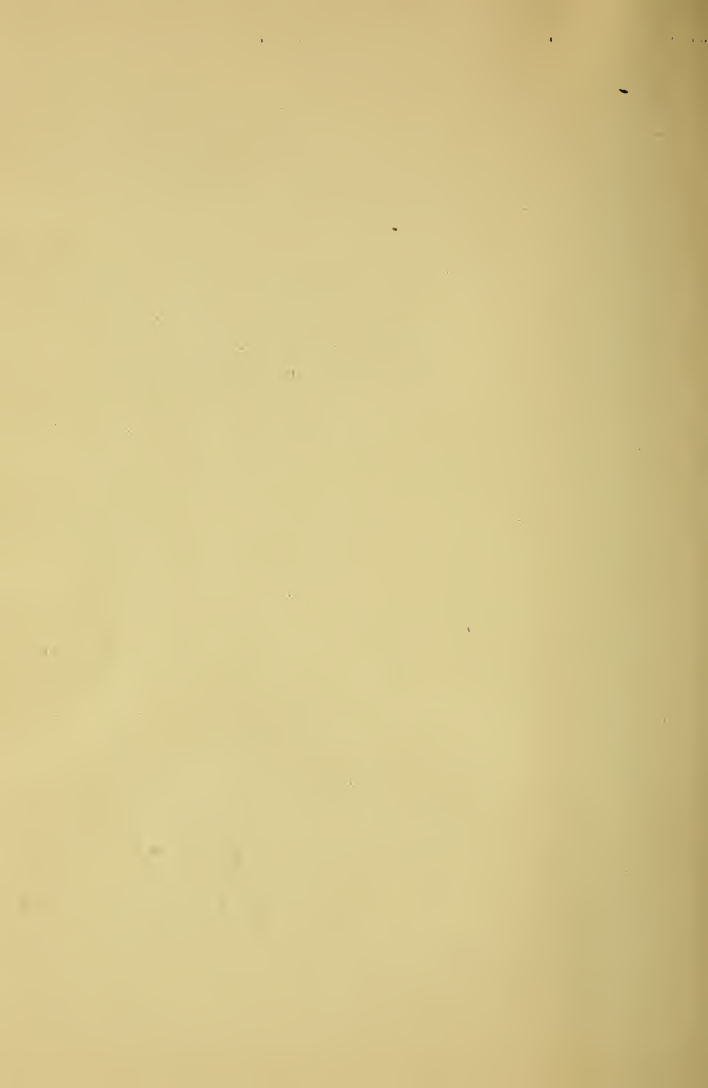
331. Shylock takes it, scrunches it up and throwing it upon the floor stamps upon it.

354. **Our** emphasized here, to show the distinction, as implied, between the spirit of Shylock and that of a Christian.

360. Shylock's spirit is now completely crushed.

378. Broken, shamed and humiliated, Shylock almost staggers off of the stage; but clutching at the door frame as he exits R 1, endeavors to appear dignified and indifferent.

385. Duke and his train, and all others exit R 3.





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